

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 841.00 P.R./485 FOR #2984

FROM Great Britain (Atherton) DATED April 5, 1937

TO NAME 1-1127 GPO

REGARDING: Closing of Indian Chain Stores in Ethiopia. Protest
of the British Government against-

Closing of Indian Chain Stores in Ethiopia.

Because of an Italian order for the closing of the Mohammed Ali chain stores in Ethiopia, the British Government, it is reported, has protested to the Italian Government. An Italian newspaper recently stated that positive proof existed of the espionage and criminal activities of the Indian firm, although the Italian Government has not made that charge against the firm. The British Government has denied that the firm was carrying on espionage.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 865d.01/290 FOR Despatch #383

FROM Italy (Phillips) DATED May 28, 1937
TO NAME 1-1127 GPO

REGARDING: Control over private enterprise- Italian East Africa.
Formation of advisory bodies.

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865D.5034/2

GML

CONTROL OVER PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

The formation of these advisory bodies ("consulte") is connected with another important and much discussed question: namely control and discipline of private enterprise in East Africa. Some regard control as an exaggerated form of centralization, an obstacle to initiative, a system of red-tape. What responsible member of the Government, I wonder, could, unless he belonged to those who long for the return of a past that can never return, have agreed that a laissez-faire policy such as no longer exists at home should flourish again in the Empire, where control from above is more than ever imperatively necessary, if only for moral reasons.

If...

If there are not more enterprises today in the Empire this is certainly not because we are putting all sorts of obstacles in the way of their establishment, but because the responsible local governments believe it necessary to proceed cautiously and gradually, as we agree.

As to the concession of monopolies, we are inclined to believe that rumors to this effect, if they exist at all, have been artfully spread by certain persons interested in discouraging their possible competitors. Companies will never be given a monopoly, even when they represent, as they affirm, all the private activities falling within their respective categories. It is to the interest of the Nation to leave the doors of the Empire open to all Italians of good-will, and we shall keep them open, sure that in so doing we are honestly serving the cause of our people.

It is also absolutely untrue that the State has reserved to itself or to semi-governmental organizations monopolies over certain branches. The State can and must control special productive activities fundamental to the life of the Empire and the Nation; but no obstacle will be placed in the way of the establishment and development of any sound private initiative. State control does not mean state monopoly.

Central File: Decimal File 865D.5034, Internal Affairs Of States, Economic Matters., Capital., Italian East Africa, Corporations, Other Businesses. Formulation. Regulation. Bond Issues. Stock Certificates., April 5, 1937 - May 28, 1937. April 5 - May 28, 1937. MS European Colonialism in the Early 20th Century. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5109727401%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 18 June 2025.